

LISTING OF CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

1. (Previously Amended) Apparatus for use in preparing a biological specimen sample, comprising:
 - a biological specimen filter;
 - a container for holding the filter; and
 - a data storage device attached to or positioned within the container, wherein data related to the filter is stored in the data storage device.
2. (Previously Amended) The apparatus of claim 1, comprising a plurality of biological specimen filters, the container holding the plurality of filters, and the data storage device storing data related to the plurality of filters.
3. (Original) The apparatus of claim 1, the container comprising a tray.
4. (Previously Amended) The apparatus of claim 1, the filter being configured to collect cells of a biological specimen sample contained in a liquid or a solution.
5. (Original) The apparatus of claim 1, the data storage device comprising a read only memory.
6. (Original) The apparatus of claim 1, the data storage device comprising a read/write memory.
7. (Canceled).
8. (Original) The apparatus of claim 1, the container defining a recess, the data storage device being positioned in the recess.
9. (Original) The apparatus of claim 8, the recess being generally symmetrical.

10. (Original) The apparatus of claim 8, a width or height of the recess being tapered.
11. (Previously Amended) The apparatus of claim 1, the stored data indicating a test or a combination of tests that is compatible with the filter.
12. (Original) The apparatus of claim 1, the stored data indicating a specimen that is compatible with the filter.
13. (Original) The apparatus of claim 1, the stored data indicating whether the filter has expired.
14. (Original) The apparatus of claim 1, the stored data indicating a number of processing steps involving the filter or the specimen.
15. (Original) The apparatus of claim 1, the stored data indicating one or more parameters of processing steps involving the filter or the specimen.
16. (Original) The apparatus of claim 1, the stored data comprising a unique registration number of the data storage device.
17. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 1, the filter comprising a cytological filter for collecting and examining cells of the biological specimen sample.

18. (Previously Amended) A system for preparing a biological specimen sample, comprising:
a biological specimen filter;
a container for holding the filter;
a data storage device attached to or positioned within the container;
a processor; and
a communications interface coupled to each of the data storage device and the processor,
wherein data related to the filter is stored in the data storage device and can be retrieved there
from by the processor through the communications interface.
19. (Original) The system of claim 18, comprising a plurality of filters, the container holding
the plurality of filters, and the data storage device storing data related to the plurality of filters.
20. (Original) The system of claim 18, the container comprising a tray.
21. (Previously Amended) The system of claim 18, the filter being configured to collect cells
of the biological sample contained in a liquid or a solution.
22. (Original) The system of claim 18, the data storage device comprising a read only
memory.
23. (Original) The system of claim 18, the data storage device comprising a read/write
memory.
24. (Canceled).
25. (Original) The system of claim 18, the container defining a recess, the data storage device
being positioned in the recess.
26. (Original) The system of claim 25, the recess being generally symmetrical.
27. (Original) The system of claim 25, a width or a height of the recess being tapered.

28. (Original) The system of claim 27, the tapered recess being configured to receive the communications interface.
29. (Original) The system of claim 18, the processor having a housing, wherein the container is positioned in the processor housing.
30. (Previously Amended) The system of claim 18, the stored data indicating a test or a combination of tests that is compatible with the filter.
31. (Original) The system of claim 18, the stored data indicating a specimen that is compatible with the filter.
32. (Original) The system of claim 18, the stored data indicating whether the filter has expired.
33. (Original) The system of claim 18, the stored data indicating a number of processing steps involving the filter or the specimen.
34. (Original) The system of claim 18, the stored data indicating one or more parameters of processing steps involving the filter or the specimen.
35. (Original) The system of claim 18, the stored data comprising a unique registration number of the data storage device.
36. (Original) The system of claim 18, the communications interface comprising a serial data interface.
37. (Original) The system of claim 18, the communications interface comprising a mechanical interface.
38. (Original) The system of claim 18, the communications interface comprising a wireless interface.

39. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 18, further comprising a vial for holding the biological specimen sample~~being contained in a vial~~, wherein the vial and the filter each includes a respective code.

40. (Previously Amended) The system of claim 39, further comprising a plurality of interfaces, respective interfaces being configured to read respective codes of the vial and the filter into the processor.

41. (Original) The system of claim 40, the respective codes comprising barcodes.

42. (Original) The system of claim 40, the respective interfaces comprising electro-optical interfaces.

43. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 18, the filter comprising a cytological filter for collecting and examining cells of the biological specimen sample.

44-50. (Canceled).

51. (Previously Amended) Apparatus for preparing a biological specimen sample, comprising:

a specimen filter; and

a data storage device on the filter, wherein data related to the filter is stored in the data storage device to indicate whether the filter has been utilized.

52. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 51, the filter being adapted for use with a slide processor to permit~~, wherein the slide processor is configured~~ to determine whether the filter was previously utilized based on the data in the data storage device.

53. (Previously Amended) The apparatus of claim 52, wherein the slide processor is configured to compare previously stored data and data stored in the data storage device on the filter.

54. (Previously Amended) The apparatus of claim 53, the biological specimen sample being housed in a vial, wherein the slide processor is configured to compare data stored in the data storage device on the filter and data stored in a data storage device associated with a specimen vial.
55. (Previously Amended) The apparatus of claim 53, wherein the data storage device stores a unique number or code that indicates whether a filter has been utilized.
56. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 51, the filter comprising a cytological filter, for collecting and examining cells of the biological specimen sample.
57. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 1, the filter having a cylindrical shape.
58. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 18, the filter having a cylindrical shape.